THE IBERIAN ATLANTIC: TIES, NETWORKS, AND BOUNDARIES

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I believe that the Iberian Atlantic must be treated as a historical and geographical complex[1] which was created throughout the sixteenth century and lasted until the beginning of the eighteenth century, encompassing Spain, Portugal, Flanders, the Hispanic fortresses in North Africa, the West and Central-West coast of Africa, the Atlantic Islands (Azores, Madeira, Canary islands, Cap Verde, São Tomé), as well as Spanish and Portuguese America. The unification of the Iberian crowns in 1580 and the new configuration of the Catholic Monarchy created the ideal framework for developing this loose and open combination until 1640, when Portugal declared independence.[2] This period of sixty years witnessed the most intense economic, cultural, institutional and political exchange between the different parts of the system. However, this complex had already begun to be established before 1580 and partly survived the political separation of Portugal from Spain, despite war between 1640 and 1668.[3] The Iberian Atlantic was established through social networks and commercial circuits that connected different markets and regions. Slave trade was crucial in this process. Cultural ties also were important for maintaining and developing this system, as were the convergent political interests of the Iberian kingdoms facing French, English, and Dutch competition. This historical and geographical complex was open to relations with Europe beyond the Pyrenees, as well as North America, East Africa, and the Far East, showing a variable geometry of boundaries and changing levels of integration of the different regions. Manila's direct dependence on Mexico

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[1] I have adopted a notion coined by Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, "A evolução dos complexos histórico-geográficos", *Ensaios*, vol. II, *Sobre História de Portugal* (Lisbon: Sá da Costa, 1968), 13–23.

[2] J.H. Elliott, "The Spanish Monarchy and the Kingdom of Portugal, 1580–1640", *Conquest and Coalescence. The Shaping of the State in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Mark Greengrass (London: Edward Arnold, 1991), 48–67.

[3] For Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, 1580 is a point of arrival that increased Iberian economic integration for the next forty years, before the erosion of the Spanish imperial engagements and the impact of British and Dutch rivalry on the Portuguese empire: see "1580 e a Restauração", in *Ensaios*, vol. II, 255–91.

and its relations with Portuguese Macao are a clear case of the extension of this complex.[4]

This essay challenges the Northern vision of the Atlantic system that resulted from the search for a common western civilisation, built through the American and the French revolutions, which could justify NATO, the political and military organisation created after the Second World War to face communist expansion. This political vision of the past is implicitly based on the anachronistic idea of the supremacy of the British over the Spanish and Portuguese Atlantic.[5] It reinforces the division into four "continents"—Europe, North America, Africa, and South America—in order to distinguish the Northern (supposedly dynamic) parts of the system from the Southern (supposedly backward) parts. I reject this development of the myth of continents, implicitly built on the myth of climates and corresponding levels of civilisation.[6] It creates a completely artificial perception of the past, ignoring the foundations of the Atlantic system and the changing configurations that evolved over the course of five centuries. It disregards the connections and technological transfers between different areas, supposing permanent regional units that simply did not exit. Where, for instance, should we place the frontier between South and North America? How are we to acknowledge the deep penetration of the Spanish empire into North America or the constant presence of North-western Europeans in the South Atlantic? How are we to divide the shared environment of the Caribbean islands? How are we to acknowledge the crucial role of the slave trade to North and South America, mainly conducted by the Portuguese and English, but also by the Dutch and Spaniards?

This Northern vision of the Atlantic system has been subject to criticism. Jack Greene, for instance, rightly pointed out the huge difference between New England, the Middle and Southern colonies, and the British Caribbean islands with regard to specific economic functions, ethnic configurations, and political weight.[7] His work contributed to breaking

[4] Pierre Chaunu, *Les Philippines et le Pacifique des Ibériques, XVI^e, XVII^e et XVIII^e siècle*, 2 vols. (Paris: SEVPEN, 1960–66).

[5] See D.W. Meinig, *The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History*, Vol. 1, *Atlantic America, 1492–1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986); and Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History. Concepts and Contours* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).

[6] See Martin W. Lewis and Kären E. Wigen, *The Myth of the Continents. A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

[7] Jack Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness. The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988).

down the ideological foundations of the model, showing diversity as a result of environment and forms of interaction with the Spanish and French models. John H. Elliott has demolished the idea of an essential backwardness of the Spanish empire, showing different trends of development through time and space. His comparison between the British and the Spanish empires in America is a masterpiece of research that set the record straight, thoroughly articulating the different moments of occupation, urban development—much more important in the Iberian case until 1800—types of native societies and forms of interaction between colonisers and colonised, policies of integration and segregation, forms of political and religious control, and institutional frameworks as well as ideological and cultural development through the Enlightenment and the experiences of emancipation. Elliott drew attention to "a circum-Atlantic community which consists of continuously fluctuating relationships along both an east-west and a north-south axis", and to how the French and British economies were dependent on Spanish American silver and Brazilian gold. He rightly pointed out the permanent tension between transfer and transformation, integration and fragmentation of this world.[8] Serge Gruzinski has also contested the dominant vision of "backward Spanish America", showing the enormous dynamic of Mexican colonial society. He analysed the different points of view of the colonisers and the colonised tangible in vibrant literary and artistic expression. Gruzinski studied the Iberian World during the Catholic Monarchy and established that the cultural coherence of this first global empire was obtained through the circulation of information, knowledge and people.[9] Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra in turn challenged the current vision of an exclusively northern enlightened historiography in the second half of the eighteenth century, showing how Spaniards and Spanish Americans built their own critical and original perspectives of the past during the same period. In subsequent works Cañizares-Esguerra contested the opposition of Catholics and Protestants: he stressed the shared European

[8] John H. Elliott, *Imperial Spain, 1469–1716* (London: Penguin, 1963); *Spain and its World, 1500–1700* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); "Atlantic History: a Circumnavigation", *The British Atlantic World, 1500–1800*, ed. David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), 233–49; *Empires of the Atlantic World. Britain and Spain in America, 1492–1830* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).

[9] Serge Gruzinski, *La colonisation de l'imaginaire. Sociétés indigènes et occidentalisation dans le Mexique espagnol, XVI^e-XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: Gallimard, 1988); *L'aigle et la Sibylle. Fresques indiennes des couvents du Mexique* (Paris: L'Imprimerie Nationale, 1994); *Les quatre parties du monde. Histoire d'une mondialisation* (Paris: La Martinière, 2004).

vision of the Native Americans as pagans and idolaters, arguing in favour of a Pan-American approach.[10]

I agree that the Atlantic system was based on the permanent exchange between different regions and European powers involved and that main axes changed through time. But too much continuity is assumed for both Northwest and Southwest European experiences at home and overseas. The new realities in the field imposed different forms of interaction with natives who showed different capacities (or possibilities) to negotiate their survival and influence the new colonial systems. Transfer is a comfortable notion, but departure and experiment, not to mention discontinuity, should be much more present in the horizon of the historian as adequate tools to understand the Atlantic world. Africa, for instance, has been primarily been seen as the reservoir for a slave labour force. It was much more than that, though, bringing with it technical competence, cultural vibrancy, and artisanal skills.

The Iberian Atlantic, then, may be considered as disputable a notion as the British Atlantic, especially now that the relative integration of the Atlantic system is increasingly recognised. But the Iberian Atlantic preceded the British Atlantic and was extremely important—from an economic, social, and urban point of view—until (at least) the beginning of the eighteenth century. It can be useful as a significant case study for the relation between global and regional history, since it formed a relatively coherent subsystem, with strong connections with the world outside the Atlantic, namely the Pacific and the Indian Oceans.

This essay also takes on board the debate on Wallerstein's theory of world systems, which helps us to understand the major economic structures and how they shaped space.[11] The importance of the New World for European expansion was sufficiently acknowledged by Wallerstein

[10] Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World. Histories, Epistemologies and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001); *Puritan Conquistadors. Iberianizing the Atlantic, 1550–1700* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).

[11] Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, 3 vols. (San Diego: Academic Press, 1974–89). The Eurocentric bias of the model was directly or indirectly criticised by Jack Goody, *The East in the West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); R. Bin Wong, *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997); Andre Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); and Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

and even by his critics. Wallerstein was much inspired by Braudel,[12] but also by Magalhães Godinho, who in 1950 wrote a crucial article on the Atlantic world translated into English only in 2005.[13] It was Godinho who indicated the possibility to analyse the Atlantic as a geographical and historical complex, just as the Mediterranean, but on another scale. This "Braudelian" vision was later developed into an audacious model for the Indian Ocean by Kirti Chaudhuri.[14] Godinho proved how integrated the Atlantic was in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, an integration underpinned by the search for gold and silver, the expansion of fishing zones, the need for slave labour, and the search for dyewood and gum. He demonstrated why the Iberian powers chose to invest in the South Atlantic from the very beginning, a much more rich and interesting area offering dyewood, silver and the conditions for sugar cultivation, while the driving force of exploration in the North Atlantic was the fishing industry.

My critique of the world system theory is not only that it supposes a permanent central role of Europe from the sixteenth century onwards, but also that it focuses too much on economic structures. Even if analysis in economic terms is essential to understanding trends of migration, settlement and transportation, we would miss the full picture if we did not take into account the political and cultural levels of territorial organisation and social integration. Networks of trade, for instance, were based on trust and to understand the delicate mechanisms of trust building we have to study social codes and ethnic environments.[15] Political changes can break apart previously integrated economic areas, while cultural

[12] Fernand Braudel, *Civilisation matérielle, économie et capitalisme, XV^e-XVIII^e siècle*, 3 vols. (Paris: Armand Colin, vol. 1 [orig. pub. 1967], 1979), vol. I; English translation, *Civilisation and Capitalism, 1500–1800*, 3 vols. (London: Collins, 1981–4). The inclusion of China, India, and the Ottoman Empire in the notion of world economies shows Braudel's comprehensiveness.

[13] Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, "Sugar Fleets and Gold Fleets, the Seventeenth to the Eighteenth Centuries", *Review. Fernand Braudel Center*, vol. XXVIII, 4 (2005): 313–37. This volume of *Review* was dedicated to the work of Magalhães Godinho. It enlarged the discussion I organised in 2004 in Paris with Luiz Felipe de Alencastro and a large number of scholars, including Immanuel Wallerstein and Om Prakash: see Francisco Bethencourt and Luiz Felipe de Alencastro, *Le Portugal et le Monde. Lectures de l'œuvre de Magalhães Godinho* (Lisbon: Centro Cultural Calouste Gulbenkian, 2005).

[14] Kirti N. Chaudhury, *Asia Before Europe. Economy and Civilisation of the Indian Ocean from the Rise of Islam to 1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[15] Francis Fukuyama, *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity* (London: Penguin, 1995); Philip Curtin, *Cross-Cultural Trade in World History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984); Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers. The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

forms of identity can resist and eventually disrupt political and economic integration. As such, this essay takes as its focus three separate, but intimately related issues: the economic, social, and cultural processes that forged the Iberian Atlantic; the different periods of development and decline in that geographical complex; and its boundaries and levels of integration or separation over time.

I. Slow and Long Iberian Exchange: 1492–1580

In the first instance, the role of the Portuguese in forging the Iberian Atlantic should not be underestimated. Columbus learned the system of currents and winds in the Middle Atlantic from the Portuguese. In 1476 he set out as a Genoese commercial agent in Lisbon and became more and more involved in overseas voyages, particularly to West Africa. He married Filipa Moniz, daughter of the first captain of Porto Santo. Columbus offered his services to England, France, and Castile before Isabel the Catholic decided to support his project to reach Asia navigating westwards.[16]

Magellan was a Portuguese nobleman who fought in India from 1505 to 1513, participating in the conquest of Goa and Malacca. Back in Portugal, he immediately enrolled in the expedition of the Duke of Bragança, who conquered Azemmour in North Africa. In 1517, Magellan offered his services to Charles V because he felt he had not been sufficiently rewarded by the Portuguese king. It was in Seville, through the help of the Portuguese Diogo Barbosa, governor of the fort and arsenal of the city, and Juan de Aranda, factor of the *Casa de Contratación*, that Magellan managed to attract the main investors and convince the king to support the expedition that would circumnavigate the world.[17]

These two stories are perhaps the best known, but they only reveal the tip of the iceberg. More than 400 Portuguese who were involved in the Spanish expeditions of exploration and settlement in America from 1492 to 1557 have already been identified.[18] This may not seem significant compared to the estimated 100,000 people who emigrated from Iberia to

[16] Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *Columbus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

[17] See the excellent edition in French of the relation of Pigafetta and all the available documents concerning the expedition organised and introduced by Michel Chandeigne, *Le Voyage de Magellan*, 2 vols. (Paris: Chandeigne, 2007).

[18] Maria da Graça A. Marques Ventura, *Portugueses no descobrimento e conquista da Hispano-América. Viagens e expedições (1492–1557)* (Lisbon: Colibri, 2000).

Spanish America during that period.[19] Because foreigners were barred from the *carrera de Indias*, however, many more Portuguese emigrated under cover of a supposed Spanish identity. We also have to recognise that the number of pilots (thirty), naval officers (eleven), captains (eight), and governors (two) reveal a significant number of Portuguese among the elite, even if we are dealing with only a small sample. Pilots and captains of ships were crucial specialists on these voyages of exploration: João Dias Solis, appointed *Piloto Mayor de Castilla* in 1512, in 1516 explored for the first time Rio de la Plata; João Rodrigues Cabrilho, who participated in the conquest of Mexico with Cortés and the exploration of Guatemala with Pedro de Alvarado, was captain of the first expedition that systematically explored the coast of California in 1542.

The Portuguese did not contribute to the Spanish expansion only through their maritime expertise: Diogo Dias, an architect from Lisbon, designed, supervised, or was otherwise involved in the construction of churches, convents, colleges and hospitals of Mexico from the 1520s to 1550s. His role in the building of the Hospital de la Concepción de María in Mexico, begun in 1524, is documented. He probably also had a hand in Cortés' palace in Cuernavaca built between 1523 and 1528.[20] In 1523, Diogo Ribeiro became principal cartographer of the *Casa de Contratación* of Seville. His world maps from 1525 to 1532 and his rigorous updating of the coastlines of America and Asia reflect the shared culture and intense exchange of information between Portugal and Castile.[21] The Franciscans Paulo de Azevedo and António Freire, or the Augustinians Francisco de Andrade and Bartolomeu de Lisboa, again, played an important role in the foundational period of the religious orders in Mexico. Some of the bishops in Spanish America, like Francisco Vitória in Tucumán, were of Portuguese origin.[22]

The reverse movement, from Castile to Portugal, was restricted to social elites—there are no traces of significant numbers of Castilians migrating

[19] Nicolás Sánchez-Albornoz, *La población de América Latina desde los tiempos colombianos al año 2025*, 3rd ed. (Madrid: Alianza, 1994).

[20] Gauvin Alexander Bailey, *Art of Colonial Latin America* (London: Phaidon, 2005); Leopoldo Castedo, *Historia del Arte Iberoamericano*, vol. 1, *Precolombina. El arte colonial* (Madrid: Alianza, 1988); John F. Scott, *Latin American Art: Ancient to Modern* (Gainsville: University of Florida Press, 1999).

[21] *Portugaliae Monumenta Cartographica*, ed. Armando Cortesão and Avelino Teixeira da Mota, 6 vols. (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1960).

[22] Robert Ricard, "Influences portugaises au Mexique pendant la période coloniale", *Revista da Faculdade de Letras* IV (1937): 272–78; and Ricard's "Los portugueses en las Indias españolas", *Revista de Historia de América* (México) 34 (1952): 449–556.

to the Portuguese empire. We notice several Castilian noblemen as captains of ships in the *Carreira da Índia*, like Bermúdez Díaz in 1505, Don Luiz de Guzmán in 1519, or Don Fernando de Monroy in 1524.[23] Don Alfonso de Monroy, *clavero* of the Order of Alcántara, was exiled in Portugal probably for taking the side of the Princess Juana and King Afonso V of Portugal against Isabel the Catholic. Monroy's descendants reached important positions: his son Don Gutiérrez de Monroy was *fronteiro* in Arzila and captain in India in the 1510s, and captain of Santa Cruz do Cabo de Gué (Agadir in Morocco) in the 1530s.[24] Throughout the fifteenth century, Spaniards became members of the hierarchy of the church in Portugal. In the following century, they contributed significantly to the overseas missions of the Society of Jesus, with men like José de Anchieta and Juan de Azpilcueta Navarro in Brazil or Francisco Xavier in Asia. The exchange of scholars between Portugal and Castile was extremely important, too: Martin de Azpilcueta Navarro, for example, became professor of canon law at the University of Coimbra after teaching in Toulouse and Salamanca. In Coimbra in 1549, he published the most successful manual of confessors of his time, printed in many editions in different languages. In his old age, he became the defender of the Archbishop of Toledo, Bartolomeo Carranza, in the inquisitorial trial that had been transferred to Rome.[25] Luis de Molina, a Spanish Jesuit, studied at the University of Coimbra and was professor of theology at the University of Évora for twenty years. There he wrote his four volumes on *De liberi arbitrii*, published in Lisbon in 1588, which triggered a passionate theological discussion on the relation between free will and divine grace.[26]

To date, there are no studies precisely identifying the full scale of the social and political exchange between the two kingdoms. We just have traces of the circulation of elites and existence of a shared culture concerning the art of war and the principles of public administration. It is undeniable that the Venetian and Genoese experiences of expansion in the Mediterranean influenced the political and military system of captains established by the Portuguese in the ports they conquered in North Africa, while the Aragonese expansion in the South of Italy provided the

[23] *Memória das armadas*, ed. Chuan Dui Pu Wang Lu, facsimile with an introduction by Luís de Albuquerque (Macao: Instituto Cultural de Macau, 1995).

[24] Joaquim Figanier, *História de Santa Cruz do Cabo de Gué (Agadir), 1505–1541* (Lisbon: Agência Geral das Colónias, 1945).

[25] Rodrigo Muñoz de Juana, *Moral y economía en la obra de Martín de Azpilcueta* (Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra, 1998).

[26] Frank Bartholomew Costello, *The Political Philosophy of Luis de Molina* (Rome: Institutum Historicum S. I., 1974).

framework for the system of viceroys and governors.[27] The fact is that the Portuguese and the Castilians shared the same system of captains and governors, with a three year contract and a regular inspection at the end of the term of office, although the first stage of the expansion in America witnessed different experiments, like the Portuguese system of perpetual seigniorial lands granted by the king in the Atlantic islands and Brazil, or the Castilians system of *adelantados* catering to the specific issue of the military frontier.[28]

The circulation of noblemen, artists and traders among the Iberian courts was a medieval reality, evidenced by economic activity, constant matrimonial alliances or political exile due to civil wars or faction fights.[29] This phenomenon thrived during times of expansion, when the two main Iberian powers, Castile and Portugal, tried to divide the exploration of the world between them. The treaty of Tordesillas, signed in 1494, can be seen not only as a point of arrival, but also as a new framework that saw interests of the two kingdoms converge when it came to protecting their shared monopoly of inter-continental navigation.[30]

Cultural ties were extremely important in this process. Many Portuguese were bilingual by that time, both because of inter-regional economic connections resulting from important networks of merchants and agents in the main fairs, markets and ports of Iberia—Minho and Trás-os-Montes had a strong relation with Galicia and León, interior Beiras and Alentejo with Extremadura, Algarve with Andalucía[31]—and the traditional circulation of elites among Iberian universities and princely courts. Portuguese authors like Gil Vicente, Camões, Jorge Ferreira de Vasconcelos, just to mention a few, wrote also in Castilian. The contrary was not so common, although Portuguese was used in Castile as a

[27] Michel Balard and Alain Ducellier (eds.), *Coloniser au Moyen Age* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1995); also their *Le partage du monde. Echanges et colonisation dans la Méditerranée médiévale* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1998); Jacques Heers, *Gênes au XV^e siècle. Civilisation méditerranéenne, grand capitalisme et capitalisme populaire* (Paris: Flammarion, 1971); David Abulafia, *The Western Mediterranean Kingdoms: The Struggle for Dominion* (London: Longman, 1997).

[28] Manuel Lucena Salmoral et al., *Historia de Iberoamerica*, Vol. 2, *Historia moderna* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1990); Francisco Bethencourt and Diogo Ramada Curto, eds., *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[29] Rita Costa Gomes, *The Making of a Court Society: Kings and Nobles in Late Medieval Portugal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[30] Julio Valdeón Baruque (ed.), *El Testamento de Adán*, Catalogue of the exhibition on the Treaty of Tordesillas (Valladolid: Sociedad del V Centenario del Tratado de Tordesillas, 1994).

[31] Joaquim Romero Magalhães, *Para o estudo do Algarve económico no século XVI* (Lisbon: Cosmos, 1970) and *O Algarve económico, 1600–1773* (Lisbon: Estampa, 1988).

language of poetry throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Castilians could easily adapt to the Portuguese environment, as the famous case of Fr. Luis de Granada can testify.[32] Scholars crossed frontiers very easily: we can count dozens of Portuguese teaching in Castile and Castilians teaching in Portugal. The proximity of languages was a major tool to facilitate exchange, a reality that worked in both ways. Crucial books of Spanish and Spanish American authors were published for the first time in Portugal, while many books by Portuguese authors were directly written in Castilian and published in Spain.[33]

The conclusion concerning this long period of slow but steady interpenetration is that the medieval reality of people circulating among the different Iberian kingdoms was dramatically increased by Atlantic expansion. The continuities between Iberian and overseas social and cultural practices were disrupted by the adaptation to different natural environments, by the integration of native structures, and by the new ethnic configurations of colonial societies. In many cases, as in the coasts of Guinea, the Portuguese inserted themselves in the African system of chiefdoms while maintaining contact with Iberian merchant networks. The first African slaves transported to America brought with them specific religious culture and technical skills that had a real impact in mining and industry.[34] This period witnessed the beginning of a structural integration of the Iberian Atlantic—economic, social, and political. The unification of the Iberian crowns by Philip II in 1580 boosted this process. Even if the overseas territories of the two monarchies were supposed to maintain their constitutional pact and their separate identity—as stated by Philip II at the *cortes* (parliament) of Tomar in 1581 following the conquest of Portugal—the reality was different. The connection between both empires became much more effective, with steady networks of merchants operating across frontiers more than before, regular interaction between

[32] Maria Idalina Resina Rodrigues, *Frei Luís de Granada y la literatura de espiritualidade en Portugal (1554–1632)* (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 1988) and *Estudos Ibéricos. Da cultura à literatura. Pontos de encontro, séculos XIII a XVII* (Lisbon: Instituto de Cultura e Língua Portuguesa, 1987).

[33] *L'édition d'auteurs portugais à l'étranger*, ed. Francisco Bethencourt, (Lisbon: Centro Cultural Calouste Gulbenkian, 2004), *La literature d'auteurs portugais en langue castillane*, ed. Francisco Bethencourt (Lisbon: Centro Cultural Calouste Gulbenkian, 2002).

[34] John K. Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1680* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); the importance of Congolese Christianity for the creolisation of the Atlantic was highlighted by Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundation of the Americas, 1585–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Also see Toby Green, *The Rise of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Western Africa, 1300–1589* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

neighbouring governors and prelates, and stronger circulation of scholars and missionaries.

II. The Creation of a New Social Configuration Across Empires: 1580–1640

It can be argued that the organisation of the Iberian Atlantic was due to two crucial economic developments: the slave trade and the contraband of silver. The slave trade obviously brought with it an enormous economic activity, connecting the different parts of the "system" (loading ports in Africa, possibly scales on Atlantic Islands, unloading ports in America and Iberia, contractual ports and financial markets in Iberia and Flanders, protection forts in Northwest, West, and Central West Africa), involving huge amounts of capital (namely to build, maintain, and arm ships), and facilitating an important financial resource for the political powers (taxes and rents). In 1513, the Castilian king decided to take control of the slave trade to the Caribbean and placed local and regional requests for slaves under royal contract. From the 1520s onwards almost all of the licences were controlled directly or indirectly by the Portuguese, since they monopolised the access to the slave providers in Africa. During the second half of the sixteenth century, the main Portuguese contractors, like Manuel Caldeira, could boast a huge network of agents and correspondents across the whole of the Iberian Atlantic.[35]

In 1595, the Spanish king decided to create a monopoly, based on a general *asiento*. The Portuguese dominated the *asiento* until the revolution of 1640: the successive contractors—Pedro Gomes Reinel, João Rodrigues Coutinho, António Fernandes d'Elvas, Manuel Rodrigues Lamego and Manuel Sousa—were responsible for the transport of over 300,000 slaves to Spanish America and for the payment to the royal coffers (despite constant court cases) of more than 100,000 ducats each year.[36] The Portuguese exercised control over the main ports of access to the African slave traders. Besides the slave trade to Spanish America, they also controlled the traffic of human beings to Brazil. The latter became more significant during the seventeenth century.[37] Nevertheless, the *asiento* represented

[35] Maria da Graça A. Mateus Ventura, *Negreiros portugueses na rota das Índias de Castela (1541–1556)* (Lisbon: Colibri, 1998).

[36] Enriqueta Vila Vilar, *Hispano-América y el comercio de esclavos. Los asientos portugueses* (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanos, 1977).

[37] David Eltis, "The Volume and Structure of the Transatlantic Slave Trade: A Reassessment", *William and Mary Quarterly* 3rd series, 58.1 (2001): 17–46; Luiz Felipe de

another scale of trade, because the contractor simultaneously controlled the Portuguese licences to load slaves in Africa. In fact he was a double contractor, playing with what possibilities the two kingdoms offered, controlling the acquisition as well as the transport of slaves. Each contractor developed a huge network of correspondents, agents, and factors in the ports of Africa and America, managing legal and illegal paths.[38] As a matter of fact, the *asientista* benefited from a formal contract and the legal advantage of having his agents of control in the ports of destiny. It was exactly this legal network that allowed the contractor to develop fraud and contraband on a large scale. The *asientista* directly connected the two sides of the Atlantic, because the conditions of slave trade could not conform to the imposition of sailing to Spanish America from the ports of Seville and Cadiz. The contractors explored the official ports of Cartagena and Vera Cruz, but they also used (illegally) the port of Buenos Aires to introduce slaves in the viceroyalty of Peru. Even the official sea route from Cartagena to Lima through Nombre de Dios or Portobelo, Panama, and Callao had to compete with a much more difficult path through the Andes organised by the Portuguese.[39]

The contraband of silver was the other face of the slave trade. The main route of the contraband from Potosí to Europe was through Buenos Aires. Since the re-foundation of this town in 1580, the main traffic with Brazil (Salvador, but also Rio de Janeiro and São Vicente) for food, timber, metals, and manufactured goods, or with Angola for slaves, was in the hands of Portuguese merchants.[40] Buenos Aires was a mere trading post, because goods would not be used or even stored there. The imported goods would satisfy the needs of the Northern provinces and reach the centre of Peru, involving the merchant networks in all areas who wanted to cut down the huge costs of the official Atlantic route through the Isthmus of Panama. We have to keep in mind that in 1580 Potosí was by far the

Alencastro, *O trato dos viventes. Formação do Brasil no Atlântico Sul, séculos XVI e XVII* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2000); Toby Green, *The Rise of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade in Western Africa, 1300–1589* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Also see www.slavevoyages.org.

[38] Enriqueta Vila Vilar, *Aspectos sociales en América Colonial: de extranjeros, contrabando y esclavos* (Bogotá: Instituto Caro y Cuervo, 2001); Antonino Vidal Ortega, *Cartagena de Indias y la región histórica del Caribe, 1580–1640* (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla, 2002).

[39] Linda Newson and Susan Minchin, *From Capture to Sale: The Portuguese Slave Trade to Spanish South America in the Early Seventeenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

[40] Rosendo Sampaio Garcia, "Contribuição ao estudo do aprovisionamento do escravo negro na América espanhola", *Anais do Museu Paulista*, 16 (1962), 7–195; Alice Piffer Canabrava, *O comércio português no Rio da Prata (1580–1640)* (São Paulo: Universidade de São Paulo, 1984).

biggest city of the New World, with an estimated population of 120,000 people, wealthy and geared towards sophisticated consumption.[41] The leading Portuguese merchant, Diogo Vega, who became citizen of Buenos Aires and *regidor perpetuo*, controlled the largest part of the trade and contraband on behalf of the Portuguese *asientistas* during the first quarter of the seventeenth century. The average number of slaves traded through Buenos Aires reached 250 per year in the 1590s, 450 in the 1600s, and 1,500 in the 1620s.

The contraband of silver cannot be estimated. But the gap between import and export can give us an idea of the hole in legal operations that could only be explained by silver that had not been declared. The commercial deficit in Buenos Aires increased from 1,7 million reales de plata in 1586–1595 to 6,4 million in 1606–1615, and 7,6 million in 1616–1625.[42] This deficit must have been roughly paid in silver. The reales de plata were at that time the main currency in Brazil, Africa, Spanish America, Manila, Macao, and as far as Goa. They were exchanged in Japan and China. Here the gain was enormous, because the rate between gold and silver was 1:5, while in Spanish America it was 1:11 in the middle of the sixteenth century, stabilising at 1:17 in the 1640s. China was the main destination of all the silver produced in the world at that time.[43] The Portuguese, who had seen gold from Africa decline since the middle of the sixteenth century, did not have any means of payment in India, South-East Asia, and China other than the Japanese silver, exchanged for Chinese silk by the merchants of Macao until the expulsion of the Portuguese in 1639,[44] and the Spanish American silver, smuggled through Buenos Aires or obtained through regular trade with Spain. We have to keep in mind that the Portuguese were exchanging sugar and tobacco in Spain for wool and silver (the wool being re-exported to other European countries) and

[41] Peter Bakewell, *Miners of the Red Mountain: Indian Labour in Potosí, 1545–1650* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984).

[42] Juan Agustín Garcia, *La ciudad indiana (Buenos Aires desde 1600 hasta mediados del siglo XVIII)* (Buenos Aires, L. J. Rosso, 1937), 227.

[43] Earl Hamilton, *American Treasure and the Price Revolution in Spain, 1510–1659* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1934); Michel Morineau, *Incroyables gazettes et fabuleux métaux: les retours des trésors américains d'après les gazettes hollandaises (XVI^e-XVIII^e siècles)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, *Os descobrimentos e a economia mundial*, 2nd ed., 4 vols. (Lisbon: Presença, 1981–3); Andre Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

[44] Charles R. Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan, 1549–1650* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951).

that the Dutch trade between Seville and Setúbal exchanged silver for salt.[45]

The social side of these economic circuits is clearly visible. Thousands of Portuguese merchants, miners, sailors, and artisans moved to Spain and Spanish America in the decades following the unification of the crowns in 1580. In the first three decades of the seventeenth century, the constant complaints of Castilians about Portuguese dominating trade in the main cities of Mexico, Lima, Cartagena or Vera Cruz (not to mention minor places still crucial from the point of view of trade like Buenos Aires or Tucumán) indicates the scale of this emigration. We are talking not only about the small merchant, but also about big traders and bankers with international connections, and generally linked to the slave trade. These Portuguese communities, which relied on networks of compatriots, can be analysed as triumphant outsiders who had the assets to manage international trade better. The problem was the reaction of the insiders, the Castilian creoles, who fought back with the harsh weapon of the Inquisition.[46]

The social connection between the two empires extended to political elites. The family Correia de Sá, governors of Rio for four generations, from its foundation in 1565, is a good example of this circulation of elites coupled with matrimonial alliances. Martin de Sá, several times governor between 1602 and 1632, married Doña Maria Mendonza y Benevides from Cadiz around 1600. She was the daughter of the governor of Cadiz, Don Manuel de Benevidez and Cicely Bowerman. The mother in law of Martim de Sá came from a family of lords of the castle of Brooks on the Isle of Wight, who emigrated to Málaga and became prominent merchants in Spain. Martim de Sá's niece Vitória married the governor of Paraguay, Don Luiz de Cespedes; his son Salvador Correia de Sá, who escorted the cousin to Asunción, became involved in the wars of Paraguay against the Indians, there marrying Doña Catalina de Ugarte y Velasco, the rich daughter of a former governor of the region and relative of the main families of the Castilian elite, and collateral descendant of Don Luiz de Velasco, Viceroy of Mexico and Peru. Salvador became owner of lands in Tucumán,

[45] Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, "Portugal and Her Empire", *New Cambridge Modern History,* vol. VI, ed. J.S. Bromley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), 509–40; Virgínia Rau, *A exploração e o comércio do sal de Setúbal* (Lisbon: Faculdade de Letras, 1951).

[46] See the chapters on the Portuguese *conversos* in Spanish America by Jonathan Israel, *Diasporas within the Diaspora. Jews, Crypto-Jews and the World Maritime Empires (1510–1740)* (Leiden: Brill, 2002).

the main road for contraband between Buenos Aires and Potosí. He returned to Rio to inherit the fortune of his father and became governor in 1637, supporting the new Portuguese king D. João IV when the news arrived in Brazil. He lived in Lisbon participating in the political life of the court from 1643 to 1647, and then returned to Brazil as governor of Rio and General-Captain of Angola. He re-conquered Luanda from the Dutch with troops recruited in Rio, a significant move that signalled the irreversible decline of the Dutch in Brazil until their final expulsion in 1654. Salvador Correia de Sá maintained a strong power over the southern captaincies of Brazil—he was nominated General-Captain in 1659—enlarging his domains, investing in ship building, and maintaining a regular presence in Lisbon (he crossed the Equator twenty-seven times), where he was a member of the Overseas Council and the War Council, and secured for his elder son the title of Viscount of Asseca.[47]

We must also not forget that native Americans both contributed and suffered greatly in this age. They were decimated through the triple process of war, epidemics, and displacement.[48] In Mexico and Peru, the tradition of sedentary populations formed the basis of the agricultural system. Native populations managed to keep some cultural differences while also building new forms of identity in the colonial world. They negotiated their position and inserted themselves in the low urban strata, mixed with the colonisers, and in some cases found their way into the middle class. In peripheral regions, like the Amazon, traditional forms of living were maintained for a long time, despite the increasing presence of the colonisers. African slaves contributed more to this world than is generally acknowledged. They provided a labour force in certain regions, mainly in Brazil and the Caribbean, to some degree in New Granada and Peru, much less in New Spain. They proved to have enormous technical skills, in some cases more than the Europeans, namely for mining and industry (iron, sugar, tobacco, textiles).[49] African slaves lost their previous ethnic

[47] Charles Boxer, *Salvador de Sá and the Struggle for Brazil and Angola, 1602–1686* (London: Athlone Press, 1952).

[48] See Bruce G. Trigger, Wilcomb E. Washburn, and Richard E.W. Adams', eds., *Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas.* In particular, vol. 2, *Mesoamerica,* ed. Richard E.W. Adam and Murdo J. MacLeod; and vol. 3, *South America,* ed. Franck Solomon and Stuart Schwartz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999–2000).

[49] Leslie Bethell (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Latin America,* vols. 1–3. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984–5); *New Societies: the Caribbean in the Long Sixteenth Century,* ed. Pieter C. Emmer, vol. 2 of the UNESCO *General History of the Caribbean* (Paris: UNESCO / Macmillan, 1999); and vol. 3, *The Slave Societies of the Caribbean,* ed. Franklin W. Knight (Paris: UNESCO / Macmillan, 1997).

allegiance and in many cases they struggled to keep their previous faith, Muslims being the most affected. The virtual disappearance of the enormous diversity of ethnicities imposed by the conditions of trade and by slave owners who wanted to avoid ties of solidarity that could lead to revolt, created a curious, culturally unifying effect: religious beliefs and practices of spirit possession, dance, art, music, and martial arts can be observed with variations from the Caribbean islands to Brazil. The imposed conversion to Catholicism and the organisation of confraternities to integrate freedmen and slaves created a marginal form of negotiation. Confraternities helped to mitigate the worst conditions of slave exploitation and stimulated a certain degree of manumission. This form of religious sociability created the necessary framework for a degree of circulation of freedmen between different regions of the Spanish and the Portuguese empires. One case of particular note is that of the freedman Lourenço da Silva de Mendonça, who campaigned in the 1680s in Lisbon, Madrid, and Rome against slavery and was supported by confraternities of black people.[50]

III. Disruption and Decline of the System: 1640–1703

The recovery of political independence by Portugal in 1640 meant a complete disruption of the slave trade in Spanish America. The contract was interrupted for ten years, the Portuguese merchant community in Seville, estimated at about 2,000 people, vanished for several decades. The Portuguese communities in the main ports of Cartagena and Vera Cruz were expelled, while the Portuguese in New Spain and Peru—especially in the regions of Charcas, Paraguay, Tucumán, and Rio de la Plata—were placed under surveillance (disarmed, removed from public office, sent to the interior, forbidden to trade). In Lima, 6,000 Portuguese had to negotiate their protection with the authorities and make a huge payment.[51] In

[50] Christiane Falgayrette-Leveau, ed., *Brésil: l'héritage africain*, catalogue of the exhibition (Paris: Musée Dapper, 2005); Naana Opku-Agyemang *et alii*, *Africa and Trans-Atlantic Memories: Literary and Aesthetic Manifestation of Diaspora and History* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World, 2008). On da Silva, see Richard Gray, 'The Papacy and the Atlantic Slave Trade: Lourenço da Silva, the Capuchins and the Decisions of the Holy Office', *Past and Present* 115 (May 1987): 52–68.

[51] Gonçalo de Reparaz, *Os portugueses no Vice-Reinado do Peru (séculos XVI e XVII)* (Lisbon: Instituto de Alta Cultura, 1976); Stuart Schwartz, "Panic in the Indies: the Portuguese Threat to the Spanish Empire, 1640–1650", *Colonial Latin American Review* 2.1–2 (1993): 165–87.

Manila, the Portuguese community of merchants linked to Macao was expelled and the connection between the two major Iberian cities in the Far East was disrupted for several decades.[52]

However, the main Portuguese merchants and bankers in Spanish America were already being persecuted by the Inquisition when the political crisis broke out. In Lima in 1639, the *Auto da Fé* of the Inquisition paraded seventy-one New Christians accused of Judaism, almost all of them Portuguese or of Portuguese descent, including important merchants, bankers, mine owners, land owners, and doctors. Manuel Bautista Pérez, whose fortune was estimated to amount to 960,000 *reales de a ocho* (87,000 ducats), Sebastião Duarte, João Rodrigues Silva, Dr. Quaresma, Vaz Pereira, António de Vega, Paz Extravagante, Antonio de Espinosa, Luís de Lima, Diego López de Fonseca y Mesa, and Dr. Francisco Maldonado were all excommunicated and executed. In Mexico, the persecution of the Portuguese New Christians was only launched several years later, with 190 victims being paraded in the *Autos da Fé* of 1646, 1647, 1648, and 1649, the latter known as the big one, because forty-seven people were excommunicated, including the banker Simão Vaz de Sevilla. During the same decades of the 1630s and 1640s, identical *Autos da Fé* were performed in the tribunal of Cartagena de Indias.[53]

The result of this combined persecution was the total collapse of the Portuguese merchant and financial networks in Spanish America, with consequences in Manila and for the relationship between Manila and Macao. The interruption of the slave trade deeply affected the economy of Peru, but its consequences were also felt in the Caribbean and in Mexico. In a certain way, the persecution of the New Christians of Portuguese origin in Spanish America and in Spain constituted a prelude to the Portuguese revolution. That event was a response to the structural crisis of the Portuguese empire, which ceased to benefit from the advantages of a unified Iberian Monarchy since the 1620s. It sealed the growing tension between networks of Spanish and Portuguese merchants in the Spanish empire, a situation aggravated by the disaffection of parts of

[52] George Bryan Souza, *The Survival of Empire. Portuguese Trade and Society in China and the South China Sea, 1630–1754* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Henry Kamen, *Spain's Road to Empire. The Making of World Power, 1492–1765* (London: Penguin, 2003), chapter 5.

[53] In addition to the classic studies of the tribunals of Mexico, Lima, and Cartagena by José Toribio Medina, *Historia del tribunal del Santo Oficio de la Inquisición en México* (San Ángel, México: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1991), also see Nathan Wachtel, *La foi du souvenir. Labyrinthes marranes* (Paris: Seuil, 2001).

the Portuguese nobility marginalised by a distant royal court.[54] But the revolution can also be analysed as a departure from a model of convergent interests between the Iberian monarchies that dated back to the last decade of the fifteenth century. After 1640, the interests of Spain and Portugal never again converged. Yet the Iberian Atlantic did not die from one day to the next as the dissolution of colonial ties proved a long process indeed.

In 1682, the *asiento* was again contracted to the Portuguese,[55] fourteen years after the recognition of the independence of Portugal by the Spanish king. This time, the new company of Cape Verde and Cachéu was responsible for the slave trade to Spanish America, a scheme conceived to squeeze the silver needed in Portugal for her operations, now that the access to Spanish America was so difficult and the commercial crisis of Brazilian sugar and tobacco in the 1670s and 1680s required new means of payment.[56] However, the balance of power in Europe had changed dramatically since the 1640s, due to the constant decline of Spain, the resurgence of France as a major territorial power, and the war between England and the Netherlands over maritime supremacy. The Portuguese alliances with France and England against Spain changed profoundly with the creation of a steady alliance with England in 1661.[57] From that moment onwards, the Portuguese tried systematically to escape from total dependence, but they decided for England every time they were forced to choose, which proved to be the best bet to preserve the empire from the mighty maritime power. The participation of Portugal in the War of the Spanish Succession (1703–1713),[58] allied with the English and the Austrians, increased the structural dissolution of the Iberian Atlantic. The *asiento* was lost by the Portuguese once and for all: slave trade with Spanish America, ironically, now became controlled by the English and French. The treaty of Utrecht nonetheless defined a compensation for Portuguese interests: the devolution of the colony of Sacramento, which meant the

[54] António de Oliveira, *Poder e oposição política em Portugal no período filipino (1580–1640)* (Lisbon: Difel, 1991).

[55] Georges Scelle, *La traite négrière aux Indes de Castile* (Paris: Sirey, 1906).

[56] Frédéric Mauro, *Le Portugal et l'Atlantique au XVII^e siècle, 1570–1670* (Paris, SEVPEN, 1960) and *Etudes économiques sur l'expansion portugaise* (Lisbon: Centro Cultural Calouste Gulbenkian, 1970); António Carreira, *Notas sobre o tráfico português de escravos*, 2nd ed. (Lisbon: Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 1983).

[57] António Hespanha (ed.), *O Antigo Regime*, vol. IV, *História de Portugal* (dir. José Mattoso) (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 1993).

[58] Henry Kamen, *The War of Succession of Spain* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969).

renewal of the silver contraband through Buenos Aires.[59] On the Spanish side, the alliance with France proved also to be a structural shift that defined international relations in Europe throughout the eighteenth century, explaining why the Iberian powers were on opposite sides in all the wars.[60]

The discovery of gold in Brazil in the 1690s likewise can be interpreted as a major reason for the definitive dissolution of the Iberian Atlantic, since it flooded Europe with massive quantities until the 1750s.[61] It is true that Portugal paid most of her increasing commercial deficit with England throughout the eighteenth century with gold: the deficit corresponds roughly to the quantities of gold coined in England, resulting from regular trade or contraband. It is also interesting to note that while the English concentrated their efforts on the acquisition of Brazilian gold, the French focused on American silver, defining the new structural connections between Iberia and the Western powers, even if England organised a huge system of contraband to Spanish America through Jamaica.[62] This is why, by the end of the eighteenth century, the Bank of England had a huge stock of gold, while the Bank of France had a huge stock of silver. But the point here is that a gold coin had a far too high value for ordinary (or even significant) purchases in a market place generally based on silver. This is why the Portuguese never ceased to search for access to Spanish American silver, namely through the southern and northern frontiers of Brazil. But by that time, the Iberian system no longer was viable.

IV. The Iberian Atlantic System: A Re-Assessment

The core of the Iberian system rested upon a broad Atlantic geography: Castile and Portugal, the west coast of Africa from Senegal to the Cuanza river, New Spain, Peru, New Granada, and Brazil. Flanders was extremely important during the foundational period because the main cities, such as Antwerp, could function as an important web for collecting capital,

[59] Luís Ferrand de Almeida, *A colónia de Sacramento na época da Sucessão de Espanha* (Coimbra: Faculdade de Letras, 1973); Joaquim Romero Magalhães et al., *Portugal en la región Platina*, exhibition catalogue (Montevideo: Embajada de Portugal, 2007).

[60] Gonzalo Anes, ed., *El Antiguo Régimen. Los Borbones*, vol. IV, *Historia de España Alfaguara*, dir. Miguel Artola (Madrid: Alianza, 1983).

[61] Charles Boxer, *The Golden Age of Brazil, 1695–1750* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962); Virgílio Noya Pinto, *O Ouro Brasileiro e o Comércio Anglo-Português* (São Paulo: Editora Nacional, 1979).

[62] Adrian Pearce, *British Trade with Spanish America, 1763–1808* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2007).

placing orders, and connecting the markets of North-western, Central and Southern Europe. The separation between production and transport through the Atlantic on one side, and the re-distribution in Europe on the other, developed over the course of the sixteenth century. The growing importance of Amsterdam and the political separation of the Northern provinces from the control of the Castilian king disrupted the integration of this area in the Iberian Atlantic, but maintained part of the economic connection through the New Christian network. Catalonia, which had played a leading role in the Western Mediterranean complex, became more and more involved in the Atlantic throughout the eighteenth century. Manila represented a curious extension into the Pacific Ocean: it participated in the Iberian Atlantic complex since its foundation in 1570, exchanging silver for silk and porcelain. The Indian Ocean was also involved in the Iberian Atlantic in a marginal way, mainly after the 1670s, when the *carreira da Índia* was allowed to establish a scale in Brazil on its way back.[63] Mozambique became integrated in the Iberian Atlantic with the booming of slave trade in the last decades of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century. The interior of Brazil never really became integrated into the Iberian complex: its exploration and integration only occurred throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The same could be said about vast regions of the Spanish empire, where the real-time distance between centres and peripheries could be tremendous.

The boundaries of the Iberian complex were very porous. It depended on transportation of Atlantic goods to Western and Northern Europe by competitors like the French, the Dutch and the British. These competitors were present across the Atlantic since the sixteenth century, first as interlopers, then as settlers. In the seventeenth century they managed to maintain some control of territories in South America (first in part of Brazil and then in Guyana), and they transferred Brazilian technology of sugar mills to Caribbean Islands, where they established successful enterprises that changed the economic geography of the Atlantic. The British, French, and Dutch colonies of North America were not as successful at the beginning, but they developed the means of transportation and guaranteed the contraband of North-western European manufactured goods into Iberian America. We can say that Northern Europeans absorbed the silver from Peru or Mexico and the gold from Brazil because of unequal commercial

[63] José Roberto do Amaral Lapa, *A Bahia e a Carreira da Índia* (São Paulo: Editora Nacional, 1968).

exchange, control of industry, and capacity for attracting capital. The success of tobacco (and later cotton) added another piece to the Atlantic puzzle, allowing the middle and southern colonies of North America to reach much higher levels of production than their Iberian competitors in these crucial markets. Throughout the eighteenth century, the integration of South and North Atlantic became much more important than in the past, with the comparative decline of Iberian commercial and war fleets. The impact of the industrial revolution contributed to the transfer of economic and political power from the South to the North. The role of Madeira as a regular stopover point of English ships bound for America beginning in the second half of the seventeenth century through the eighteenth, throughout the eighteenth century[64] is a sign of the profound change of the system. The American Revolution increased the direct connection between North America and Iberia, while the national revolutions in the Iberian colonies in the Americas completed the break away from the complex, favouring direct connections between North and South America or between South America and Northwest Europe.

A final question must be asked: what survived from the Iberian Atlantic? From my point of view there are three main aspects: language, religion, and a model of social interaction. Today a debate persists about the differentiation of Spanish in various Spanish-speaking countries, yet I do not think the linguistic differences across national boundaries are much more important than what we find among English-speaking countries. There is a common heritage that allows communication among different cultural configurations, from Cuba to Argentina, or from the Puerto Rican community of New York to the Mexican communities of California in all domains, including radio, television, literature, and cinema. By contrast, the interaction between the Portuguese and Spanish-speaking worlds is complicated by the fact that Portuguese is not easily understood by Spanish speakers. Religion, on the other hand, is a second main feature which survived from this historical complex. Classified by Robert Ricard as a spiritual conquest or, more accurately, by Serge Gruzinski as a colonisation of the imagery, massive political conversions meant a shared vision of the world shaped by the Catholic Church in the long run. The model of social interaction can be defined, in general, by racial discrimination

[64] David Hancock, *Oceans of Wine: Madeira and the Emergence of American Trade and Taste* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); T. Bentley Duncan, *Atlantic Islands. Madeira, the Azores and the Cape Verdes in Seventeenth-Century Commerce and Navigation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972).

without significant (or historically rooted) racial segregation. The populations embraced by the colonial system were hierarchically classified and discriminated against in their access to schooling, public office, Church hierarchy, and political jobs, while they were not permanently segregated from a spatial or social point of view. One of the main forms of ethnic integration was found in religious conversion, which created a marginal space for negotiation inside the system. The result of this process is that societies could discriminate different "castes" in an obsessive way, like in Mexico or in Peru, creating a complicated social, professional and ethnic hierarchy. At the same time, there remained some space for ethnic mixing and individual mobility. It is this racist ambiguity that makes the difference, still nowadays, between what is conventionally called North America and South America.

UNDERSTANDING THE LUSOPHONE ATLANTIC

David Brookshaw

In José Saramago's novel, *A Jangada de Pedra*, the Iberian Peninsula breaks off from Europe as a geological chasm appears along the Pyrenees. The Peninsula drifts out into the Atlantic in the direction of North America, only to turn south, eventually coming to a halt in the South Atlantic, mid way between Africa and South America. The novel was first published in 1986, the year Portugal and Spain entered the European Union, and is a fairly clear statement that the author saw the future of the two countries as lying more with the nations they had spawned over the centuries of their imperial history than with Northern Europe, and in particular, the richer members of the European Union.[1] Thinkers on the left in Britain had also questioned the desirability of giving precedence to membership of a European political and economic community over traditional links with the countries of the Commonwealth. What is interesting here is that we have a Portuguese writer including both his own country and its traditional rival, not to mention potential enemy, in his utopian solution to an Iberian future, an attitude that stands in contrast to the narrower Portuguese nationalism of the old colonial dictatorship that came to an end in 1974.[2]

Yet if we can accept what might be termed an overall Iberian presence in the Atlantic based on linguistic and cultural similarities, and a commonality of strategic interests that was not necessarily limited to the sixty years of the Habsburg dominion between 1580 and 1640, it also should be remembered that the Portuguese role in the traffic of humans and cultures backwards and forwards across the Atlantic was far more important than that of the Spanish. Even before the Treaty of Tordesillas formally delineated Portuguese and Spanish spheres of influence, the Portuguese

[1] The novel was published in English translation in 1994, under the title of *The Stone Raft*. Saramago won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1998.

[2] The tradition of Iberianism in Portugal goes back into the nineteenth century, but is viewed rather differently in Portugal than equivalent aspirations in Spain. Saramago, who has lived in Spain since the early 1990s, made Iberianist declarations in the press in 2007 that caused considerable controversy in Portugal. See João Céu e Silva, "Não sou profeta, mas Portugal acabará por integrar-se na Espanha", *Diário de Notícias* (15 July 2007): <http://www.dn.pt/inicio/interior.aspx?content_id=661318>.

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